

Munster U14 A Championship Final

Cork 2-11 -v- Kerry 1-16

Kerry are Munster U14 A Champions for the first time since 2018 in a pulsating encounter in Mallow on Saturday. These two sides met in the All Ireland Final last year in which Kerry were victorious in an encounter that will live long in the memory of players and supporters. While some players from last year were no longer involved for either side this encounter lived up to the same excitement and drama. Both sides exchanged scores from Carla O'Regan and Jessie Lynch before Cork scored two on the bounce from Sorcha O'Rourke and Lily Foskin saw Cork open up a two-point lead by the thirteenth minute. They were looking to be pulling away from Kerry but the Kingdom kept their composure with two points from Jessie Lynch (one from a free) to draw the sides level. Cork struck a purple patch and scored two goals in quick succession to open up a six-point lead. Ava Coughlan & Sarah Galvin raising the green flags. On the basis of watching underage Cork teams this season they have a tendency to pull away from teams. Kerry however didn't let the heads drop and kept their composure for the remainder of the half Gracie O'Sullivan with a goal and Leah Griffin with a point saw the deficit reduced to two. Cork's Carla O'Regan steadied the ship for the rebels from a free to push the lead back out to three. Kerry made one last drive at the Cork goal approaching halftime and were successful scoring two unanswered points from Jessie Lynch & Lily Riordan as Cork went in at the break one point in front in what was a frantic finish to the first half. Kerry would have been happy with the strong finish & response and would take great encouragement going into the second half considering the scoring threat Cork had available and their failure to build on their six-point advantage. Clearly shell-shocked by Kerry's strong finish to the first half, Cork started the second half the strongest scoring three unanswered points and extending the lead back out to four. Both sides exchanged frees Jessie Lynch for Kerry and Carla O'Regan for Cork as the lead remained at four points. Disaster for Kerry shortly after as Cork were awarded a penalty. It was a chance to extend the lead to seven but the attempt at a penalty went wide. It spurred Kerry into action scoring three unanswered points. Two Jessie Lynch frees and a Gracie O'Sullivan point from play saw the deficit reduced to the bare minimum as both sides felt the game was there for the taking. As the sides exchanged points the excitement among the spectators. The sides were level approaching full time and with injury time now in play Kerry went ahead thanks to Louise O'Donoghue to the delight of the travelling support. It was only the second time in the match Kerry went ahead. Victory was assured when Jessie Lynch pointed deep into injury time to the delight of the Kerry faithful.

Cork: O McGrath, H Sweeney, D O'Flaherty, M Buckley, H Deasy, S Og Walsh, A Kelleher, A Coughlan (1-0), Ciara O'Regan, Carla O'Regan (0-06f), L Foskin (0-02 1f), S Galvin (1-0), S O'Rourke (0-01), E Motherway, C Foley (0-01).

Subs: M Ni Luanaigh for O McGrath, G O'Sullivan for S Og Walsh, T Moynihan (0-01) for S O'Rourke, E Lee for Ciara O'Regan, R O'Mahony for C Foley.

Kerry: N Mulvihill; N O'Connor, A Brosnan, S Lyons: A Slattery, E Dillane, M O'Reilly; L Griffin (0-01), S Flynn; K Kirby, J Lynch (0-09 7f), L Riordan (0-03), E O'Donnell, G O'Sullivan (1-01), E Evans.

Subs: L O'Donoghue (0-01) for E Evans, A Bowler for A Slattery, J O'Connell (0-01) for E O'Donnell, F Lynch for K Kirby, A Doyle for N O'Connor.

Referee: Billy Cummins, Tipperary